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BOROUGH OF BEWDLEY



Annual Reports
of
Medical Officer of Health
and Sanitary Inspectors
for
1953



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BEWDLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL.

YEAR 1953.

Mayor :

Councillor Mrs. D. L. LAWRENCE, J.P., C.C.

Chairman of Health Committee :

Alderman R. B. JACKSON.

Vice-Chairman of Health Committee :

Councillor A. J. HOWELL.

Water and Health Committee :

Alderman H. N. FROST, J.P., C.A. (Deputy Mayor)

Alderman P. W. PALMER

Councillor Mrs. D. L. LAWRENCE, C.C. (Mayor)

Councillor Mrs. F. S. PRITCHARD

Councillor R. W. COLES

Councillor H. GITTINS

Councillor E. J. FINCH

Councillor L. E. FRANKLIN

Councillor B. INCE

Councillor W. E. JAMES

Medical Officer of Health :

DR. R. W. MARKHAM, B.A., M.B., B.Ch., D.P.H.

Sanitary Inspectors :

Mr. S. J. ROWE, M.Inst.R.A., Cert.R.S.I. and
S.I.E.J.B. (Borough Surveyor) (to 6/12/53)

Mr. J. N. PITTS, Cert.R.S.I. and S.I.E.J.B.
(to 26/9/53)

Mr. J. E. SHEEN, M.R.San.I., M.S.I.A., Cert.R.S.I.
and S.I.E.J.B., Cert.R.S.I. Meat & Other Foods
(from 7/12/53)

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS
OF THE
BEWDLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report on the Health of the Borough for the year 1953.

In accordance with instructions from the Ministry of Health, the report is divided into the following sections :—

- “ A ” Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area.
- “ B ” General Provision of Health Services for the Area.
- “ C ” Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.
- “ D ” Housing.
- “ E ” Inspection and Supervision of Food.
- “ F ” Prevalence of and Control over Infectious Diseases.

SECTION "A"

Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area

Area (in acres)	3,681
Number of inhabited houses (end of 1953) according to Rate Books	1,506
Rateable Value	£21,593
Sum represented by One Penny Rate	£84/9/10
Registrar General's estimate of resident population (mid 1953)	4,858

Industry within the Borough of Bewdley is on a small scale, the principal source of local employment being a factory processing Animal Feeding Stuffs, Seeds, Fertilisers, etc., and where 70 persons were employed during 1953.

Other sources of employment include a small light engineering works, and Saw Mills, and, remaining from the traditional Bewdley industries, a Brass Foundry, Rope Works, and Leather works.

VITAL STATISTICS FOR THE AREA

Live Births.

	1953			1952		
	<i>Total.</i>	<i>Male.</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total.</i>	<i>Male.</i>	<i>Female.</i>
Legitimate	72	32	40	69	36	33
Illegitimate	4	—	4	3	3	—
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	76	32	44	72	39	33

The Live Birth rate per 1,000 estimated population of the Borough was: 1953, 15.6 (1952, 14.89).

The Live Birth rate for England and Wales was: 1953, 15.5 (1952, 15.3).

Still Births

	1953			1952		
	<i>Total.</i>	<i>Male.</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total.</i>	<i>Male.</i>	<i>Female.</i>
Legitimate	1	1	—	2	1	1
Illegitimate	1	1	—	—	—	—
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	2	2	—	2	1	1

The Still Birth rate per 1,000 births (Live and Still) was: 1953, 25.64 (1952, 27.02).

The Still Birth rate per 1,000 births for England and Wales was: 1953, 22.4.

The Still Birth rate per 1,000 estimated population in the Borough was: 1953, 0.411 (1952, 0.413).

The Still Birth rate per 1,000 estimated population for England and Wales was: 1953, 0.35 (1952, 0.35).

<i>Deaths</i>	1953			1952		
	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
	48	24	24	59	32	27

The Death rate per 1,000 of the estimated population was: 1953, 9.87 (1952, 12.21).

The Death rate for the whole of England and Wales was: 1953, 11.4 (1952, 11.3).

Maternal Mortality

There were no deaths of mothers associated with childbirth during the year.

The Maternal Mortality rate per 1,000 of the estimated population was: 1953, Nil (1952, Nil).

The Maternal Mortality rate for the whole of England and Wales was: 1953, 0.76 (1952, 0.72).

Deaths of Infants under 1 year.

	1953			1952		
	<i>Total.</i>	<i>Male.</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total.</i>	<i>Male.</i>	<i>Female.</i>
Legitimate	—	—	—	2	—	2
Illegitimate	2	2	—	—	—	—
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	2	2	—	2	—	2

The Infant Mortality rate was: 1953, 26.3 (1952, 27.7).

The Infant Mortality rate for England and Wales was: 1953, 26.8 (1952, 27.6).

Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	...	...	...	...	10
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	...	...	...	...	—
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	...	...	...	...	—
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	...	...	...	...	—

Causes of Death.

<i>Ref. No.</i>					<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
1, 2.	Tuberculosis	...	...	...	1	—
3.	Syphilitic Disease	...	...	...	1	—
10, 12, 14.	Cancer	...	...	...	5	5
17.	Vascular Lesions of the Nervous System	...	...	...	3	2
18, 19, 20.	Heart Disease	...	...	...	8	8
23.	Pneumonia	...	...	...	—	3
24.	Bronchitis	...	...	...	—	1
25.	Other Diseases of Respiratory System	...	...	...	—	1
28.	Nephritis and Nephrosis	...	...	...	—	1
29.	Hyperplasia of Prostate	...	...	...	1	—
32.	Other defined and ill-defined diseases	...	...	...	3	3
34.	All other accidents	...	...	...	2	—
	Total	...	...	...	<hr/>24	<hr/> 24

SECTION "B"

General Provision of Health Services for the Area

Bacteriological examinations of samples taken from producers and manufacturers, and all chemical examinations of food, milk and water are carried out by the Worcestershire County Council Laboratory. Bacteriological examinations of consumer samples of milk, water and ice-cream are undertaken by the Public Health Laboratory of the Worcester Royal Infirmary, in addition to the routine clinical pathology.

Ambulance Service.

This is provided by the Worcestershire County Council as Local Health Authority, and is based on Kidderminster.

Home Nursing and Health Visiting

There are two District Nurses available in the Borough, one each for Bewdley and Wribbenhall. There is also one whole-time Health Visitor.

Clinics

An Ante-natal Clinic is held once a fortnight in the Wribbenhall Parish Room, a doctor being in attendance monthly.

An Infant Welfare Clinic is also held fortnightly, with a doctor in attendance monthly, when Diphtheria immunisation and vaccination are carried out.

Hospitals

The following hospitals administered by the Midland Regional Hospital Board are available :

1. The Kidderminster General Hospital for general medical and surgical cases.
2. The Blakebrook Infirmary.
3. The Hayley Green Isolation Hospital for Infectious Diseases.
4. The Lucy Baldwin Maternity Hospital at Stourport.
5. The Croft Maternity Home.

Tuberculosis

- (1) Treatment.—A dispensary is held twice weekly at the Kidderminster General Hospital, and there are Sanatoria at Knightwick and at St. Wulstans, Malvern.
- (2) Prevention and After-Care.—Prevention of this disease is the responsibility of the County Council and is carried out under the direction of the County Medical Officer.

An After-Care Sub-Committee administers this service in this district in conjunction with the other districts in the Kidderminster Divisional Area.

Venereal Disease.

A treatment centre is operated at the Kidderminster General Hospital by the Regional Hospital Board.

Domestic Help Service.

Under arrangements made by the Local Health Authority, Home Help Service has been established in the district and is administered locally by the Women's Voluntary Service.

Section 47, National Assistance Act, 1948

No action has been taken by the Council under this section during the year.

SECTION "C"

Sanitary Circumstances of the Area

Water Supply

1. The water supply has been satisfactory both in quality and quantity.
2. Samples of water for bacteriological analysis are taken monthly and for complete chemical analysis twice yearly.
3. The water is not plumbo-solvent.
4. No action was necessary for any form of contamination of the piped water supply.
- 5a. The number of houses supplied from the public water mains direct to houses is 1,438. Population served approximately 4,707.
- 5b. 50 houses are supplied from standpipes; population served approximately 162. 18 houses obtain water from private supplies; population served approximately 59.

Extension of Supply

A 4" water main was laid a distance of 270 yards in "Queen's Way," to serve the main Springhill Estate, Wribbenhall.

A 2" main was extended for a distance of 50 yards to serve new, privately built dwellings in Park Lane, Bewdley.

As the two standby suction gas pumps at the Waterworks are unable to meet the water supply needs of Bewdley and Stourport in an emergency, application has been made to the Ministry to sink a new 19" borehole, 300ft. deep, and to fix a new electrical centrifugal pump capable of raising 60,000 gallons per hour.

Drainage and Sewerage.

The greater part of the district has a sewer available. Sewage flows partly by gravitation and partly by pumping from three compressed air ejectors to the Sewage Pumping Station, where, after screening, it is pumped to the Kidderminster Joint Outfall Works for treatment. No serious nuisance has occurred during the year concerning the drainage system in general, and the cause of the Pumping Station breakdown, referred to in my last report, was located and remedied during the early part of the year. The plant now appears to be operating satisfactorily.

Discussions with an owner now building a house in Spencer Avenue resulted in the laying of a new 6" sewer for a distance of approximately 280 yards in Spencer Avenue, and several existing

dwelling were connected to this sewer during the year, thus further reducing the number of pail closets remaining in use in the Borough.

Fourteen existing properties and seven new dwellings were connected to the main sewer during the year.

SECTION "D"

Housing

Four new houses were completed by the Corporation during the year. Three houses were completed by private enterprise.

With regard to the development of Springhill Estate, the first four dwellings of Contract No. 2 were completed and occupied. This contract consists of 36 dwellings, and as much of the work on the remaining 32 houses is nearing completion it is anticipated that they will be ready for occupation in the early part of 1954.

The resumption of "Slum Clearance" programmes will inevitably stress the disparity between the rents of the new dwellings and the old, and a practical solution to the problem, particularly in the case of the fixed income tenants, will have to be found.

Camping Sites.

All the camping sites are inspected regularly by the Health Department staff, and no serious nuisance was discovered during the year.

There are now three sites authorised under both the Town and Country Planning Act 1947 and the Public Health Act, 1936. These are at:—

- (1) The Brant Farm, Stourport Road.
- (2) Butt Town Meadow, Northwood Lane.
- (3) Council Hill Camp, Cleobury Road.

and allow for a combined total of 210 caravans.

Planning permission for these sites required the compliance with a number of conditions relating to layout, removal of structures other than roadworthy caravans, provision of suitable sanitary accommodation, and other matters, and some progress has been made in this respect.

Enforcement action under the Town and Country Planning Act has been continued whenever possible to secure the removal of unsuitable structures.

SECTION "E"

Inspection and Supervision of Food

This work was carried out by the Sanitary Inspector during the year. See Sanitary Inspector's Report.

Food Poisoning

Four cases of suspected Food Poisoning were notified during the year, and concerned the members of one household. The effects of the illness were of brief duration. Analysis of suspected food-stuffs proved negative.

SECTION "F"

Prevalence of and Control over Infectious Diseases

Diphtheria Immunisation

The number of children immunised during the year either at Clinics, Schools or by the General Practitioners, was as follows:—

1. Aged 0 - 4 years inclusive	...	...	31
2. Aged 5 - 14 years inclusive	...	...	4
3. Reinforcing doses	...	...	69
Total			104

At the end of 1953 the percentage figures of immunised children estimated in the two age groups 0-4 and 5-14 were 59.4% and 43.3% respectively. (Based on the Registrar General's figures for the child population for 1951.)

No cases of diphtheria were notified during the year.

Notifications

Cases of Infectious Diseases notified during the year are shewn in the following table:—

<i>Disease</i>				<i>Total Cases Notified</i>	<i>Cases admitted to Hospital</i>	<i>Deaths Total</i>
Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	23	2	—
Measles	...	...	...	38	—	—
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	57	—	—
Acute Pneumonia	...	...	...	5	—	—
Suspected Food Poisoning	..	...	...	4	—	—
Erysipelas	...	...	...	1	—	—

Tuberculosis

The following table gives particulars of new cases of Tuberculosis and deaths from the disease in the area during the year.

<i>Age Periods</i>	<i>NEW CASES.</i>				<i>DEATHS</i>			
	<i>Pulmonary</i>		<i>Non Pulmonary</i>		<i>Pulmonary</i>		<i>Non- Pulmonary</i>	
	<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>	<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>	<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>	<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>
0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
20	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
25	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
35	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
45	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
55	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
65 & over	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	3	1	—	—	1	—	—	—
	4		—		1		—	

No action was necessary, or taken, with regard to Tuberculous Employees in the milk trade.

Conclusion

The services provided in the Borough remain satisfactory.

The pumps at the Main Sewage Pumping Station now appear to be operating satisfactorily.

The future of partly or wholly unfit houses and particularly those of considerable age cannot be decided until the legislation proposed by the Government White Paper, "Houses—The Next Step," becomes law. The Council will then have to consider the problem raised by the lay-out of an old and attractive Borough, where wholesale demolition would change the entire character of the district. The housing programme for the future will need careful review, in order that families displaced from unfit property may find more suitable accommodation.

I should like to thank the Mayor, Members of the Council, and the Council's Staff, for their help and co-operation during the year.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

R. W. MARKHAM

Medical Officer of Health

SANITARY INSPECTOR'S REPORT

For the year ending 31st December, 1953

Housing

Private Enterprise.—Three houses were completed during the year.

Corporation.—Four houses were completed during the year.

The Medical Officer of Health has already reported on the progress made with the development of Springhill Estate.

Squatters Camps.

I am pleased to report that during the year all remaining Nissen huts at Blackstone were vacated and have now been cleared from the site.

At the Dog Lane Camp, regular maintenance is required to keep the dwellings in a habitable condition. Misuse of the sanitary accommodation involves frequent attention and repairs to the conveniences and drainage system. A number of the occupants were re-housed by the Corporation during the year, and as the dwellings were vacated they were removed from the site.

Refuse

House refuse is collected weekly in the town and once every fortnight in the outlying areas.

In addition to house refuse, trade refuse is collected and disposed of, the average collection amounting to 15 cwts. weekly.

The provision of new Ashbins to replace old and worn bins is still presenting some difficulty, and new legislation does not clearly define whether the owner or occupier is responsible for such replacement. The absence of any definite case law on this point also adds to the difficulty of the local authority in deciding upon whom to serve such notices.

Rodent Control

During the year the following rodent infestations have been dealt with in accordance with Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries requirements :—

Private dwellings	...	...	...	295
Business premises	...	...	...	11
Other infestations	...	...	...	6
Total				312

Inspection and Supervision of Food

Food premises were inspected regularly during the year and although the age of most of the properties generally presents difficulties in the modernising and provision of the necessary facilities, a number of improvements were carried out.

Four cases of suspected food poisoning were notified during the year. Samples of the only two types of food likely to have been implicated (boiled ham and tomatoes) were submitted for analysis, but proved negative.

Milk Distribution

Dealers (principal) licences, in connection with the distribution of milk, were issued as follows :—

Tuberculin Tested Milk	...	...	...	2
Tuberculin Tested Milk (Pasteurised)	...	...	...	1
Sterilised Milk	...	...	...	2
Pasteurised Milk	...	...	...	1

Dealers (supplementary) licences issued were :—

Tuberculin Tested Milk (Pasteurised)	...	...	...	2
Pasteurised Milk	...	...	...	3
Sterilised Milk	...	...	...	2

Milk (Special Designation) (Pasteurised and Sterilised Milk) Regulations, 1949.

33 samples of milk, heat treated within the Borough, were taken by the Food and Drugs Authority (Worcestershire County Council) during the year. Analysis results were as follows :—

<i>Phosphatase Test</i>			<i>Methylene Blue Test</i>		
<i>Pass</i>	<i>Fail</i>	<i>Void</i>	<i>Pass</i>	<i>Fail</i>	<i>Void</i>
33	—	—	29	—	4

Ice-Cream

No applications have been received during the year for registration of premises for the manufacture of Ice-cream, and only one dealer remains on the register as such. Twenty-four retailers are registered for the sale of Ice-cream, many of whom deal only in pre-packed products.

Food stuffs condemned during the year included :—

Eggs	...	...	...	...	74½ doz.
Canned Vegetables	...	...	...	...	9½ lbs.
Canned Fruit	...	...	...	...	37 lbs.
Canned Meat and Fish	...	...	...	...	29½ lbs.
Miscellaneous Foodstuffs, such as					
Soup, Sauces, Cakes, Cereals, etc.	...				10 lbs.

Method of disposal of condemned food is by incineration.

Inspections

The following is a list of inspections carried out :—

Dwelling Houses	...	...	...	...	253
Houses Let in Lodgings	...	...	...	...	3
Verminous Houses	...	...	...	...	15
Infectious Disease	...	...	...	...	16
Factories (Part I only)	...	...	...	...	17
Food Premises	...	...	...	...	55
Licensed Premises	...	...	...	...	23
New Works	...	...	...	...	85
Rodent Infestation	...	...	...	...	28
Camping Sites	...	...	...	...	41
Nuisances	...	...	...	...	59
Drainage	...	...	...	...	95
Rehousing Applications	9
Water Supply	25
Miscellaneous	71

Total Inspections	...	795
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We are

Your obedient servants,

S. J. ROWE

J. E. SHEEN

Sanitary Inspectors

